E 184
.P7M5

A MEMORIAL

of the

Polish-American Organizations

OF THE UNITED STATES

in reference to the proposed

Lodge Immigration Bill,

now pending in the American House of Representatives.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.
1898.

E 84
.F9 M5

Gift
Hon H C Lodge
Je. 16 08

The persistent and studied efforts of reckless and sensational writers and agitators to belittle and traduce the character of American citizens, of Polish descent and nativity, has lead to the formation of a committee, consisting of representatives of all the large Polish-American organizations throughout the United States, for the purpose of removing in a measure the erroneous impression, which prevails in certain quarters, in regard to the Polish people. While this agititation was confined to articles of sensational writers and wild rantings of irresponsible demagogues, it was deemed the part of wisdom to treat the movement with dignified silence. The statements of certain individuals, who view the subject with eyes which are jaundiced with prejudice, that the Slavonic race is totally depraved and is without a single redeeming feature, are too absurd to merit a reply.

It remained however for the honorable senator from Massachusetts to dignify these gross misrepresentations with his scholarly and well-known literary attainments by including them in his report to the Senate recommending the passage of Senate Bill No.

112, commonly known as the Lodge Immigration Bill. The damage done to the reputation of Polish-American citizens by this report is incalculable. Were the statements therein contained allowed to pass unchallenged, some future historian in his researches might discover this remarkable document, and accepting the figures and pretended facts therein cited as true, use it as a basis of his views on the effects of immigration in the United States.

We exceedingly regret that the time at the disposal of this committee was too limited to collate all the necessary data to refute the allegations of the report so far as they relate to the Polish people. We however respectfully invite the attention of the American public to a few facts hurriedly sketched in this memorial.

To fairly adjudge the character of a race it is imperatively neccessary to know their past history, their present condition at home, and their conduct in their adopted country. For this reason we have subdivided this memorial into three chapters, in which we briefly treat of "Poland during the days of Independence"; "Poland under the reign of her despoilers", and „The Poles in America".

I.

Poland during the Days of Her Independence.

For many centuries Poland was the predominant power of Eastern Europe. Situated on the border of European civilization, her peculiar mission among the family of nations was to repel the repeated invasions and depredations of hordes of savage Mongols, Tartars, Muscovites and Turks who frequently threatened to overrun Europe and destroy her institutions. She was justly called the cavalier nation of Europe, the bulwark of Christianity and modern civilization. From the reign of Boleslas the Great (992–1025) to the date of the first partition of Poland (1772) her arms alone repelled ninety-one Tartar invasions, any one of which, if successful, would have disastrously affected, if not jeopardized, the civilization of Europe.

For the cause of Christianity, the brave chivalrous king Wladislas Warnenczyk at Warna in 1444 sacrificed his life, and the great warrior king Stefan Batory repelled the savage armies of Ivan the Terrible, and drove them back to the wild steppes of Russia. To prevent the eventual subjugation of Europe to the fanatical rule of the Mussulman John III Sobieski met the Turkish forces at Vienna and

forever established the supremacy of the Cross over the Crescent.

Although incessantly engaged in warfare she never waged a war for offensive purposes or for the aggrandizement of her territories. All her wars were conducted solely for the defense of her own territories and those of her civilized neighbors. The spirit of her constitution prohibited the maintenance of large standing armies in time of peace. This proved to be a great source of weakness to the nation, of which her despotic neighbors readily availed themselves at the time of first partition of Poland.

Though martial in her character, Poland in no small degree cultivated the finer arts of peace. To the civilized world she gave the first example of religious toleration. "They had" said the great publicist, Sir James Mackintosh, in his "An account of the Partition of Poland", "another singularity of which they might justly have been proud. Soon after the Reformation, they had set the first example of that true religious liberty, which equally admits the members of all sects to the privileges, the offices and dignities of the commonwealth. For nearly a century they have afforded a secure asylum to those obnoxious sects of Anabaptists and Unitarians, whom all other states excluded from toleration; and the Hebrew nation, proscribed everywhere else, found a second country, with

protection for their learned and religious establishments in this hospitable and tolerant land".

At an early age she took a prominent part in the advancement and dissemination of learning in Europe. To the astronomical world she gave Copernicus. The first two centers of learning in central Europe were the University of Prague. in Bohemia, and the University of Cracow in Poland. As early as the fifteenth century we find in the Polish literature such names as that of Jan Dlugosz (Longinus), the famous historian, and while, little later the names of Jan Kochanowski (1503–1584), the prince of Polish poets and Casimir Sarbiewski (Sarbievius) the Polish Petrarch, stand pre-eminent among their contemporaries. In the sister Slavonic nation, Bohemia, John Komensky, (Comenius) won fame as one of the earliest reformers of educational methods.

The government of Poland was republican in form. Its fundamental idea and object was to secure to the Polish people the greatest possible individual liberty. Absolute slavery was never recognized. In 1347, in the historic statutes of Wislica, measures were adopted for the betterment of the condition of the peasantry. In 1413, by humane means alone, without the slightest bloodshed, the Polish people converted to Christianity the powerful pagan nation of Lithuania numbering over two millions inhabitants. A union was effected between these two great ations which subsequently in 1569 became indis-

soluble and was based upon the theory, to use the quaint language of the historic pact, of "free with free and equals with equals."

The Polish kings were elected by the representative deliberative assemblies of the nation, the diet and senate. Their powers were limited. The power of enacting laws, levying taxation and declaring war was vested solely in the diet. The main defect of the constitution was the provision which invited foreign intrigue, corruption and intervention into the land by permitting foreign princes to compete for the crown of Poland. Another sad blunder was the rule which required an absolute unanimity in passage of all laws. A single expression of dissent by any member of the diet was sufficient to prevent the enactment of any proposed measure. This anamolous power was caled the *liberum veto.* In the hands of an obstinate or corrupted delegate it proved a dangerous weapon. However the evils which resulted from these defects of government were of slow and gradual growth.

In the middle of the last century they reduced the country to a most deplorable condition. Foreign troops traversed and ravaged the fair fields of Poland with impunity. Through the machination, intrigues and bribes of neighboring despotic powers, a limited number of venal and treacherous deputies succeeded in preventing all legislative action.

Such was the unhappy condition of Polan

in 1772, when in pursuance of a pre-concerted arrangement, without the slightest pretext of right, without the formality of declaring war, in open violation of the laws of God and man, Russia, Prussia and Austria marched their troops into Poland, parceled off among themselves large portions of her dominions and then compelled the protesting diet to ratify their unparalleled robbery. This was the first partition of Poland. It was the most flagrant violation of the laws of nations recorded in the annals of man. To aggravate the enormity of their crime, to perpetuate the unfortunate existing state of affairs, these unscrupulous despoilers exacted from the unwilling diet a pledge that no attempt would be made to alter the old impotent constitution.

At the time of the first partition, the surface of Poland exceeded that of France and the number of her inhabitants was estimated at eighteen millions; a population probably exceeding that of the British Islands or of the Spanish Peninsula at that date. Of these about twelve millions were Roman Catholics, three millions were Orthodox Schismatics, one million Protestants and the remainder Jews or Mussulmen.

Realizing the great dangers which surrounded them and fearing further aggrandizement, by their treacherous neighbors upon their territories and liberties, the brave people aroused themselves from their lethargy, buried all their feuds and dissensions and proceeded peacefully and harmoniously to

strenghten their government. On May 3rd, 1791, after four years of careful deliberation the Polish diet promulgated a new constitution, which for the liberality and wisdom of its provisions compares favorably with the Magna Charta of England or our own Federal Constitution. In its main features it resembles the Constitution of the United States. It guaranteed civil and religious liberty to all alike. It declared everyone to be equal before the law. It greatly ameliorated the condition of the peasantry. The crown was made hereditary, while the pernicious *liberum veto* was abolished. The government was divided into three co-ordinate branches: the executive, legislative and judicial.

It was enthusiastically received by the nation and was adopted with singular unaminity.

"The course of this glorious revolution" says Sir James Mackintosh, "was not dishonoured by popular tumult, by sanguinary excesses, or by political execution. History will one day do justice to that illustrious body and hold out to posterity their work as a perfect model of a most arduous reformation".

In England it was hailed with delight. Fox declared it to be one of the noblest boons conferred upon man, while Edmund Burke exclaimed: "Mankind must rejoice at the great change which has taken place in Poland. It has destroyed anarchy and slavery".

This enthusiasm, however, was not shared by

the despotic ruler of Russia. She declared it to be the work of hot headed Jacobins who had no regard for the ancient order of things. Before the constitution could be fully put into operation she poured her vast armies into Poland. The perfidious king of Prussia, violating solemn treaties which he made previously with the diet to protect the constitution, followed her ignoble example. Together these despots proceeded to destroy this masterpiece of statemanship.

At this critical stage there appeared upon the scene a hero, whose spotless character, sterling virtues, splendid statemanship and great military genius, makes him a worthy pupil of George Washington. The heroic struggle of the Polish people under the leadership of Thaddeus Kosciusko forms one of the most thrilling and sanguinary events in the history of the world. All that lofty patriotism, undaunted courage and superb generalship could accomplish was done. Not until they were overpowered by overwhelmingly greater numbers and their intrepid leader fell, covered with wounds, did the proud Polish spirit yield and was the name of Poland erased from the maps of Europe.

"Thus" says Sir James Mackintosh, "fell the Polish people, after a wise and virtuous attempt to establish liberty and a heroic struggle to defend it, by the flagitious wickedness of Russia, by the foul treachery of Prussia, by the unprincipled accession of Austria, and by the short-sighted as well

as mean-spirited acquiescence of all the other nations of Europe."

We will conclude this chapter with an extract from a letter written by the Hon. John P. Altgeld to the secretary of the Kosciusko Monument Association in 1892:

"From the day when Miecislas I, the first king of Poland, bent his knee in acknowledgement of one Christian God, to the day when the great nation was shattered and divided by greedy rivals, the history of its every page is eloquent with the patriotism, the bravery, the genius, the generosity, and the tolerance of its people, and the memory of its last, almost superhuman struggle, under the heroic Kosciusko will live, as long as men love liberty and brave deeds.

"Your people have now no country. Many are paying tribute to the ruler of a kindred and ungrateful race. Many give unwilling allegiance to alien dynasties. Some have sought the ready hospitality of our great Republic, which Kosciusko helped make free, but all look forward to the day their people, the people who gave to mankind a Copernicus, a Sobieski, a Chopin, and a Kosciusko, shall again be united as one—a free people— free to choose their own government, free to make their own laws, free to teach their children the tongue of their fathers".

"Your people have my deepest sympathy in the

great wrong that has been done to them, but looking back into history I cannot help but feel that your affliction is but a transitory stage to a glorious resurrection".

II.

Poland under the Rule of her Despoilers.

Immediately after the dismemberment of Poland, the three partitioning powers adopted towards their unfortunate subjects, a policy of relentless persecution and oppression. Every method, which heartless tyranny and blind fanaticism could devise, was resorted to in order to crush the national spirit, eradicate the native customs and extirpate the Polish language. Numerous libraries, art galleries, schools and seats of learning, rich with the accumulation of centuries, were despoiled of their treasures and closed for the purpose of keeping the Polish people in the lowest state of ignorance and preventing them from participating in the progress and advancement of the world. Strenuous efforts were made, and are still being made, to Russianize and Germanize the unhappy compatriots of Sobieski, Kosciusko, Pulaski and Chopin. Yet notwithstanding all the harsh and inhuman means which have been employed by these oppressors of Poland, the national spirit of her people seems invincible. Al-

though hundreds of thousands of noble minded and public spirited men and women have been confined in subterranean prisons, transported to Siberia and doomed to pass their remaining days in banishment, amid harship and poverty, for no other crime than that of loving the faith and land of their fathers, and although the wearing of the native picturesque costumes has been interdicted and the speaking of the Polish language has been prohibited and in many instances has been made a penal offense, the love of the Polish people for their Country, its traditions, literature and faith increases as time advances. The literature of Poland reached its zenith in the present century.

Recognizing the fact that the Roman Catholic religion was the main medium for the preservation of the nation's language, traditions, patriotism and aspirations and formed the principal barrier against the amalgamation of the Polish people with the semi-civilized Muscovites and the better educated but no less conscienceless Teutons, extraordinary attempts were made by the Russian tyrants to destroy the Roman Catholic religion in Poland.

In the treaty of September 18, 1773 the notorious and licentious Russian Empress Catherine II guaranteed full toleration to her new subjects of Catholic faith. This pledge was received by the people with well merited incredulity. They recalled the terrible scenes of 1768 when the infamous Empress dispatched her Zaporogue Cossacks into Poland.

"We have", the imperial decree stated, "ordered Maximilian Zelezniak, colonel of the Zaporogues, to lead his men into Poland, together with the Cossacks of the Don, and with the grace of God destroy all the Poles who do not want to profess the "orthodox" faith. We order that this invasion into Poland destroy forever the Polish name and race". The slaughter of two hundred thousand defenseless victims, of both sexes and of all ages, proved how faithfully this cruel order was obeyed.

Such was the inauspicious be gining of the rule whose sole purpose was to destroy and obliterate all those noble sentiments which God and nature implanted in the bosom of every rational being — the love of Country and right to worship his creator in accordance with the dictates of his conscience.

The intolerant policy of religious and political persecution was also evidenced immediately after the first partition when, of the 1900 Churches of the Unites, 1200 were given to Russians and converted into Schismatic Churches. The protesting communicants of these houses of worship were arrested, persecuted and exiled to Siberia because they refused to accept the Empress Catherine as the head of their Church. The same policy has been pursued without cessation throughout the present century. It formed the subject of extensive debates in the English parliament of 1830, 32, 34 & 36. It was also discussed in the French parliament. But no definite action was taken.

In 1863 when the Polish insurrection broke out in Russia, Muraview, styled by his own countrymen the "Hangman" was appointed Governor of Lithuania. Between June 8-th and December 28-th, 1863, this executioner ordered eleven priests to be hung or shot, and thousands were deported to Siberia. In 1864 he confiscated 24 churches, in 1865, 26 and in 1867—140 churches. How terrible these scenes were the letter of an disinterested eye witness, an Englishman, G. Mitchell to Lord Russell, demonstrates.

"Who could imagine" he said, "that the Christian governor of a Christian city would order his Asiatic hordes of hideous savages to trample under their feet a Christian population, an inoffensive people, because it had approached the house of God? When the Russian troops forcibly entered the churches, they found kneeling women in the first rows and behind them were the kneeling men. The women were beaten and the men were thrown to the floor and trampled under foot. In front of the Church of the Bernardines in the Fauborg of Cracow, Captain Taraskiewicz was seen lashing with his whip the women who were trying to escape from the Cossacks by fleeing into the Church and he ordered his men to do the same. After these outrages the churches were despoiled of every object on which the Russians could lay their hands".*)

*) The events in Warsaw on October 15-th. 1861. Paris. 1862.

Similar scenes have been repeatedly re-enacted since that date. Only a few years ago a number of peaceable and unarmed citizens of Kroze, in the Gubernatorial District of Kovna, were assailed, knouted and massacred by a horde of wild Cossacks for respectfully asserting their rights to see the imperial decree by which their favorite church was closed. To coerce the recalcitrant Uniates into adopting the Greek-Catholic faith, thousands and thousands of them have been transported into the interior of Russia.

In all civilized communities patriotism is understood as love of one's native land and zeal for her general welfare and safety. In Russia it has a different meaning. There, it means devotion to the "sacred" person of the Czar, — the absolute autocrat in all secular and religious matters, and who claims the exclusive power to dispose, according to his whim, not only of the life, liberty and property of his subjects, but also of their souls. Enlightenment and absolutism can never thrive together. Despotism can only be maintained and preserved by keeping the great masses of people in the most abject state of intellectual, political and physical bondage. The knout and sword, not reason, humanity or justice, are the weapons by which the monstrous sway of Czarism can be sustained. The sentiments, aspirations and hopes of the Polish people are so antagonistic to the tendencies and spirit of Russian institutions as to be

irreconcilable. To the narrow and intolerant mind of the average Russian it is inconceivable that the Polish people do not readily become reconciled to their lot and renounce the faith, language and traditions of their fathers and blindly accept, as benefactors, the tyrants who have persecuted, butchered and robbed their fathers and brethern. No means have been left untried to bring about this result. Estates have been confiscated and given to Russian favorites in order to impoverish the people and make them dependant upon the liberality and generosity of their persecutors. The purchase of reality by Polish speaking subjects, for the same reason, was interdicted. To retard the growth of Polish literature and to suppress the national sentiment, most rigid decrees were promulgated. Thousands of ardent sons and daughters of Poland were fined, imprisoned and transported —sometimes even without the formality of a trial— for singing patriotic songs, or expressing the natural yearnings of their heart.

In Wilno in 1863 the following decree was issued:

"Whoever in whatsoever kind of public place (street, alley, park, restaurant, store etc.) shall in any conversation use the Polish language, he or she shall for the first offense pay 25 rubles, the second 50 rubles, the third 150 rubles. Further contumacy shall be punished by administrative process and eventual transportation. Non-acquaintance with any

language other than the Polish will not be accepted as an excuse".

This decree is in effect until the present date. It was posted in all public highways and shops.

To fully realize the monstrous nature of this decree, we must bear in mind that a husband, wife, brother, sister, father or mother on meeting each other in a public place could not even inadvertently express the natural emotions of their heart in the language taught them from the cradle without running imminent risk of being overheard by someone of the numerous spies, Cossacks and Police officials. who swarm the country, and be dragged before some servile tool of the government. The Jews, Germans and Tartars were allowed to use their native tongue. The Poles however were denied this privilege by virtue of this gracious decree of the Most Enlightened Ruler of all Russias and King of Poland—a title, which in view of the treatment the Poles have received at his hands sounds ironical, if not sacrilegeous.

In the limited number of schools which the government established, only the Russian language is taught. All books are coloured so as to imbue the children with hatred for the creed, language and traditions of their forefathers and instill into their minds a love for the Czar. They are taught that the Czar is the Kind Father of all; that he is the only lawful law-giver, the fountain head of the real faith and the only true and absolute ruler of all the lands from the Baltic to the Pacific Ocean. Oppression

begets resistance. Is it to be wondered, that the true Polish parent in his anxiety to prevent the mind of his child from being poisoned by such un-European Asiatic, ancient and false doctrines, should prefer to keep his child at home and let him be content with such meager knowledge as he may obtain in the home circle or at schools which are clandestinely conducted by patriotic clergymen and brave men and women? To the tyranny and attempts of the Russian government to Russianize Poland is due the large number illiterates in that unhappy land.

It is unnecessary to state that Russian government has always been the inveterate enemy of Polish literature. Not a single phrase or idea can be published in the Polish language—not even a circular or advertisement—without first securing the sanction of the censor. Hampered thus, it cannot be expected that journalism will ever reach a very high plane, as the editor is always laboring under the fear of a fine or in danger of having his publication suspended or suppressed. An recent incident—not an uncommon one—fully illustrates the workings of this abominable system of press censorship. The "Gazeta Polska", a periodical in which Henryk Sienkiewicz originally published his "Children of the Soil" and "Quo Vadis" was suspended for an indefinite period for printing an article which was previously submitted to the censor and obtained his *imprimatur*. We do not know who in this case is more worthy of com-

miseration; the unfortunate editor or the haughty Russian officials, with their perverted sense of justice. Having for its own protection appointed a censor, upon whom devolved the duty of scrutinizing every word and line submitted to him and to strike out, or alter, every sentence which might be offensive to the authorities, it would seem logical that the authorities would assume the responsibility for the publication. However "they do these things differently in Russia". The Censor offends and the editor is punished for it.

Such being the discouragements which attend the publication of writings intended for educated persons, it may readily be surmised with what favor works designed for the laboring classes and common people are received. Concessions for the publication of popular works are seldom granted. Novels and historical works are altered to suit the prejudiced views of the censors. The people having such glorious past history have not the opportunity of becoming acquainted with it. Accurate histories are not allowed to be published. Such works as are circulated are mangled, garbled and changed by the censor to such a degree as to be practically worthless.

Private circulating libraries are not countenanced by the government. The few libraries existing, under the auspices of the authorities, are filled with Russian books which the people cannot understand and do not care to read. This policy of repres-

sion has given rise among the people to the curious custom of secretly smuggling books across the frontier—not for the purpose of evading the payment of duty, but in order to secure works which are unpolluted by Russian menials. They prefer to incur the danger of paying a fine and suffering imprisonment than reading books expurgated and emasculated by the censors.

In the Polish province of Lithuania, a decree was recently issued, prohibiting the printing of Lithuanian books with Roman letters. All Lithuanian books, including prayer-books, must be printed with the barbaric Russian type. This strange decree in reference to a people who for centuries have been accustomed to the use of Latin types is certainly not conducive to the advancement of learning among that nation.

And these two nations, Poland and Lithuania, yearn with all their hearts and souls for more enlightenment. They have used all the means in their power to frustrate the plans of Russia, and secure for their people education and raise them from the slough of obscurity, despondency and ignorance in which their oppressor is striving to keep them. Many of their children have endured the rack and suffered martyrdom for this cause. Some have left their country and crossed the broad Atlantic, not merely to earn a livelihood but to enjoy those blessings, intellectual and political, which this nation, the source

of inspiration and hope of people of all oppressed nations, affords.

In Prussian Poland the condition of the Polish subjects cannot be regarded as having been greatly improved. Although compulsory education laws were enacted, the Polish language was and still is excluded from the schools. The rising generation is deprived of the opportunity of becoming acquainted with the literature which is of paramount interest to them and which reveals such untold treasures as that of their native land. The harsh measures for Germanization of the Polish provinces adopted by the early Prussian statesmen having proven futile, a little over a decade ago Prince Bismarck resorted to a heroic remedy, by striking a powerful blow at their economic condition. Over thirty-five thousand Poles were suddenly expelled from their native land. Laws were enacted for the purchase of large estates, which were to be transferred exclusively in parcels to German colonists. As late as 1886, 100,000,000 marks was appropriated by the German *Reichstag* for this purpose. During the month of February, 1898, the German government asked for an additional appropriation of 100,000,000 marks for the same purpose.

Under the patronage of the government, societies were formed for the purpose of boycotting Polish merchants, traders and manufacturers. In the present year (1898) a powerful movement has been inaugurated to compell all Polish papers to be

printed both in the Polish and German languages. Thus by forcing them to unnecessarily increases their expenses for printing and paper, it is expected to place the Polish press at a great disadvantage in competing with the German papers and so in a measure destroy their utility.

A mild instance of the petty and grinding officialism to which the Polish subjects of Germany are continually forced to submit has been afforded to us in a recent cablegram by the well-known American author, Poultney Bigelow, the classmate and personal friend of the present Emperor of Germany, published in the *Chicago Sunday Tribune* of February 6th, 1898. We republish the following extract:

[SPECIAL CABLE BY POULTNEY BIGELOW.]

London, Feb. 5.—[Copyright, 1898, by the Press Publishing Company, New York World.]—The Mazurs, inhabiting the eastermost section of Germany on the Russian-Polish frontier, have been politicaly intimidated hitherto by the government police, but now they are organizing against their old masters.

The main significance of this movement lies in the fact that their fight in mainly for right to their own language, thus creating one more obstacle to the Germanization of the Fatherland. They number a trifle more than 100,000 and their name might never have been heard but for the Polka Mazurka, which this people originated.

To illustrate the petty political intimidation in Prussia: On Sunday, Jan. 30, the peasants of Kalentschin, an insignificant village of eastern Prussia, had arranged for a meeting to discuss their economic and political condition. One speaker was to use

German the other Polish. The Governor of the district issued the following letter to the gendarmes of the village:

"The place of this political meeting must correspond to the legal requirements. Thus all doors must be open outward. There must be a square yard of space for every three people. There must also be abundant water supply on the spot in case of fire. Perhaps you can influence the landlord to the extent of making him refuse to hire his hall for this purpose."

The government hoped by insisting upon requirements suitable to a big city to frustrate the gathering of a handful of poor peasants in one room of a country taveren. Fortunately the meeting was held, but is a typical case of that form of officialism which makes Prussian rule disliked in spite of its many virtues.

In this connection it may not be uninteresting to know that all the Mazurs are Protestants.

The attitude of the Austrian government towards its Slavonic subjects is not much better. The same policy of repression is continually pursued. The recent riotous demonstrations in the Austrian parliament against the cabinet of the late prime minister Badeni for making the Slavonic language in certain Slavonic districts co-ordinate with the German, amply proves with what intolerance the German people regards the Slavonic race and to what shameful tactics they will resort to keep them in subjugation.

III.

Poles in America.

In view of the merciless persecution of the Polish people under the rule of their despoilers, it is not strange that they should emigrate in such large numbers to the land of freedom, for which their compatriots, Kosciusko and Pulaski, fought and bled during the American revolution, in order that they might enjoy those advantages, economical and political, which are unjustly denied to them at home. It is true that among them a certain percentage of illiteratures may be found, though the number is by no means as great as claimed by the Honorable Senator from Massachusetts in his report to the Senate. Illiteracy, though greatly to be deplored, is not *per se* a crime. We must further respectfully insist that the figures cited by the Hon. Caleb Lodge in his report on the Immigration question are not, so far as they relate, to the Polish people, reliable. The sources from which they have been obtained are not the most trustworthy. Under the heading of Poles are included other elements with which the Polish people have nothing in common.

Experience in this country soon teaches the illiterate the advantages of education, and self-interest will dictate to him the necessity of learning to read and write.

A visit to the homes of the Polish people in this country will convince the impartial observer that they are cleanly, orderly and law-abiding people. They have established at great expense numerous schools in which the English language is taught. They have founded libraries and heartily support their own press as well as papers published in the English language.

Owing to their thrifty and industrious habits they soon become property owners and cheerfully contribute their share of taxes for the support of the government. Socialistic and anarchistic doctrines never receive any encouragement from them. For this country and its institution they entertain the profoundest respect.

The limited time at our disposal did not enable us to gather complete statistics in order to refute the figures quoted by the Honorable Senator from Massachusetts. We have, however, been able to secure a large number of commendatory testimonials from officials who by reason of their position come most closely in contact with the people and are best qualified to judge their character. The officials we refer to are the mayors and police officials of large cities.

Of the large number received, we will subjoin only the following extracts from letters sent to Mr. F. H. Jablonski, President of the Polish National

Alliance of the United States of North America and chairman of the Joint Committee for drafting this memorial:

Detroit, Jan. 24, 1898.—The Polish citizens of Detroit are probably more numerous to the population of the city than in any other city in the United States. One section in our city is inhabited exclusively by Polish families.

It must be conceded that taking into consideration their condition as very recent immigrants to this country, poor, unskilled and ignorant of the ways of our people they are advancing very rapidly. We have already in our community Poles whose native ability brought them to a high plane in business lines and it must be said that their record for peacefulness and good citizenship is above reproach. It is gratifying for me to say that there is no Pole in this city, however old, sickly or dependent, who does not prefer to earn his bread by honest labor. Conditions of the times in Detroit, as I suppose elsewhere, have brought thousands of families to a state of privation. William C. Maybury, Mayor.

Manistee, Mich., Jan. 24, 1898.—We have a Polish population in this county of over 5000 souls. They are within the city limits over 600 Polish school children between the ages of 5 to 16 years. The total number of arrests in this (Manistee) county was 288 for 1897. The total population of the county is about 30,000. We think that there are but few counties of like population that can show such record for peace and good order. I do not think that the number of Polish people arrested is equal to their proportion, and as a rule those of that nationality arrested are charged with misdemeanors and minor offenses. It has been stated by some who are prejudiced, politically or otherwise, that Polish people furnish more than their quota of arrests, but records do not show this, but prove the contrary.

Personally I have found our Polish citizens to be peaceable and law-abiding people, frugal and idustrious and progressive. A great many of them own their homes and some have acquired considerable other property. Quite a number have purchased farm lands in this vicinity and are developing the country and prospering personally. There are of course some exceptions to the general rule, but the exceptions are no more numerous comparatively with them than with Americans or any other nationality.

I have always maintained that Polish people by reason of their past history and their being at present practically without a nation are especially and peculiarly adapted to our institutions and so to become loyal, patriotic and intelligent American citizens without any other national attachments to divide their patriotic zeal. THOS. SMUARTHWAITE, Mayor.

MILWAUKEE, JAN. 25, 1898.—The Polish-Americans in this city are very industrious and have a fair reputation.

F. BARINGER, Secretary.

TOLEDO, O., JAN. 25, 1898.— We have very little bother with Polish-American residents of this city, they quarrel among themselves, mostly church troubles but are very peaceful with other citizens. Total number of arrests for 1897 are 4673, out of which 100 to 150 would be fair average for the Polish people.

C. H. DURIAN, Sec'y of Police.

NEW YORK, JAN. 29, 1898.— In reply to your request to be informed as to the reputation of the Polish people of this city for peacefulness, industry and intergrity, it is my personal opinion that they possess all these traits and are a very desirable class of immigrants. JOHN J. NAGLE, M. D.

Chief of the Bureau of Municipal Statistics

From the metropolis of the State in which the Honorable Senator from Massachusetts discovered, according to his Senate report, such a astonishingly large and alarming proportion of criminals among the Polish people we received the following letters:

Boston, Jan. 25, 1898.— I am directed by His Honor, Mayor Quincy, to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 25th with reference to the character of the Polish-American residents in our community. I am pleased to say that though we have a fairly large number of Poles in our community their demeanor is so exemplary that it rarely happens that any one is before our police court even on a trivial charge. We have a Polish Roman Catholic church in the district of our city called South Boston, and we find the communicants exemplary in every way. I think I may say that it is the opinion of the citizens of Boston that the Poles, far from being a detriment, are a positive addition to our community in the direction of morality and good citizenship. Thos. A. Mullen, Secretary.

Boston, Jan. 28, 1898.— We have mailed you a copy of the annual report of the Board of Police for the city of Boston for the year of 1897. On page 30, you will find from the statistics that the number of arrests of Polish-American residents is small as compared with the other.

The captain of one of our police districts in which the largest number of arrests is made each year states that the number of arrests of the Polish-Americans is smaller in proportion to the number of residents than that of some of the other nationalities. He also states that their reputation for peacefulness and industry is very fair, and that many of them are very good farm hands.

A. P. Martin,
Chairman of Board of Police.

Omaha, Feb. 4, 1898.— Replying to your communication of recent date asking for a statement of the reputation for peacefulness, industry and intergrity which the Polish American residents bear in our community, I would say that we regard our Polish-American population very highly for the various qualities you have mentioned. They are peaceful, law-abiding citizens and there is no class of workmen in this city who bear a better reputation for industry than do they. They are honest and trustworthy and have the confidence of the community.

Frank E. Moores, Mayor.

His Excellency H. S. Pingree, Governor of Michigan forwarded the following:

Lansing, Feb. 8, 1898.— The Polish people of Detroit have always been very peaceable citizens and are one of the most industrious classes of foreigners that come to our cities. They are always glad to work and are not usually particular as to the kind of work, as long as they can earn an honest dollar. When one takes into consideration the training which they have had in their own country I think they are a very good people and entitled to a great deal of credit. I might say also that I have a great expectations from the Poles, that is from the next generation, as almost any other class of people we have here. They have a very strong physique, fitting them for all kinds labor and they are very quick and willing to learn.

H. S. Pingree, Governor.

Buffalo, Jan. 24, 1898.— In reply to your communication of January 21, in which you request a brief statement as to the reputation for peacefulness, industry and intergrity that the Polish-American residence bear in this community, I take pleasure in saying that the general reputation of the class of citizens refered to and in the respect indicated in your note, is subject of constant and favorable comment. The Polish-American

population of Buffalo s very large and has for years been notable for industry, thrieft and good citizenship.

CONRAD DIEHL, Mayor.

CHICAGO, FEB. 3rd, 1898.— In response to your request for an expression of opinion from me as to the character and standing of the Polish population of Chicago, it gives me great pleasure to bear testimony to the fact, that the Polish residents of this city are, on the whole, among the most industrious and reputable of our citizens. They are law-abiding and industrious, and deserve great credit for the manly manner in which on their arrival in this country, they struggle against and overcome, the difficulties that confront them.

CARTER H. HARRISON, Mayor.

P. S. I am informed that the Polish population of Cook County is over 175,000.

At some future day this committee expects to furnish to the Congress and the American Public reliable statistics of the real status of the Polish people in America. Suffice it for the present to say that viewing the subject from either a moral, economical or political standpoint, we fail to perceive the necessity for the enactment of the proposed immigration bill. The wonderful resources of this country have not been fully developed, and it certainly cannot be contended that the late industrial stagnation and financial depression was do to an overcrowded labor market.

Finnally we respectfully submit that while the Polish people are oppressed in their native land and are denied the privilage of learning to read and

write in their native tongue the same consideration should be shown to them as is shown by this bill to the unfortunate Cubans struggling for liberty and the semi-civilized Hawaians.

Appealing to the exalted sense of justice and humanity of the members of Congress and the American Public in general, we, representatives of all the large Polish–American organizations of the United States respectfully ask that the Lodge Immigration bill be not adopted.

Respectfully Submitted,

THE JOINT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

F. H. Jablonski, President,
Rev. E. Sedlaczek, Vice President,
Leon Szopinski, Secretary,
565 Noble st., Chicago, Ills.
Michael Majewski, Treasurer,
Lucian Horbaczewski,
Joseph Polczynski,
M. J. Sadowski,
Max A. Drezmal,
Stephen R. Barszczewski,

POLISH NAT'L ALLIANCE of the U. S. of N. A.

Office: 102-104 W. Division st., Chicago.

Theo. M. Helinski, Censor,
J. Czernik, Vice Censor,
F. H. Jablonski, President,
Jos. Polczynski, Vice President,
M. J. Sadowski, Gen'l Secretary,
M. Majewski, Treasurer,
Jos. Blaszka, M. Rzeszotarski, I. Mroz, F. X. Kucharzewski, } Directors,
S. R. Barszczewski, Editor.

POLISH ROMAN CATHOLIC UNION of America.

Office: 519 Noble st., Chicago.

P. Kiolbassa, Honorary President,
John Jachimowicz, President,
Theo. Ostrowski, Vice President,
John Manna, Gen'l Secretary,
Albert Jendrzejek, Treasurer,
Rev. P. Gutowski, Rev. V. Barzynski, } Spiritual Directors,
M. P. Kossakowski, M. D. High Medical Ex.
Rev. Eug. Sedlaczek, F. Czerwinski, Thaddeus Klein, Albert Wachowski, Leon Szopinski, } Directors.

SECOND POLISH MILITARY CORPS of America.

Military Board.

Sigismund Schmidt, Captain,
Michael Hazinski, Lieutenant,
Michael Malinowski, Adjutant,

Civil Board:

Anton Gorecki, President,
M. Malinowski, Gen'l Sec'y.
J. F. Jackowski, Treasurer.
Fr. Lewandowski,
Joseph Walkowiak, } Directors.
Fr. Jozwiak,

THE POLISH ASSOCIATION of America.

Stephen Czaplewski, President.
E. Czarnecki, Vice-President.
Ignatius Gorski, Gen'l Secretary.
Michael Salati, Treasurer.
John Weiher,
Anton Hudzinski, } Directors.
Ernest Krenz,
Very Rev. H. Gulski. Spiritual Director.

POLISH TURNERS' ALLIANCE of America.

K. Zychlinski, President,
A. Bielinski, First Vice President,
W. Statkiewicz, Second Vice President,
A. Blaszczynski, Treasurer.

POLISH ALLIANCE of State of Ohio.

General Office: 301 Fleet st. Cleveland, O.

T. Olsztynski, President.
L. Koperski, Vice-President.
J. Deranek, Treasurer.
T. Rutkowski, Gen'l Secretary.
J. Szczutkowski,
J. Ziolkowski,
L. Blazejczyk,
} Directors.

UNITED POLISH SINGERS of America.

C. Duzewski, President,
Ign. Mroz, Vice President,
Albin Rosinski, Recording Secretary,
Michael Nowakowski, Financial Sec'y,
A. Urbanski, Treasurer,
W. Perłowski, Librarian,
John N. Nowicki, Musical Director.

POLISH YOUNG MEN'S ALLIANCE of America.

Fr. P. Danisch, President.
Stephen K. Sass, Vice-President.
John M. Sienkiewicz, Commissarius.
Fr. T. Wolowski, Secretary.
John S. Zawilinski, Treasurer.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 011 563 187 1

Hollinger Corp.
pH 8.5